

## adoption: where do I start?

### making the decision

Adopting a child can be a very emotional experience, but will likely be one of the most rewarding experiences of your life. One of the first challenges is making the decision to adopt and committing to it. It's easier than you think to adopt a child. The process isn't difficult and there are many children available. There are approximately 1200 children in the care of the province who are available for adoption. Many of these children are not infants, yet are children up to the age of 19. Many are children with special needs, or are looking for families who share their cultural heritage, or some may be part of a sibling group who wish to stay together. All of these children are hoping to find a family that they can be a part of – permanently.

### the application process

When you have made the decision to provide one or more of these children with a stable, loving home, you will need to contact your local Ministry of Children and Family Development office. An adoption worker will give you an application asking for basic information about you and your family. You'll then be invited to attend an Adoption Education Program where you'll learn about special needs of these children. You will also have an opportunity to ask questions, clarify information and meet with other adoptive families. Families who have previously adopted are an excellent source to help you learn more about the process. There are also several parent groups and associations who can help you learn more about adoption first-hand.

### matching children with families

After these initial steps have been taken, you'll go through a home study assessment with your adoption worker. When the home study is complete, you'll be registered into a database which assists in matching children with prospective families.

Once you have accepted the proposal of a child, you'll have a series of pre-placement, supervised visits with the child. One or more adoption workers will be available to assist with this process. These visits will continue until a comfortable relationship with the child develops, at which time you'll be able to spend some time alone with the child.

### the rewards

This process varies from person to person, and from home study to home study. The time involved is as individual as you are. It may take several months, yet the rewards are worth the wait. One or more of these special children could be waiting for you.

for information on adoption call your local ministry office or our toll free line 1 877 ADOPT 07

